



GEORGIA HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

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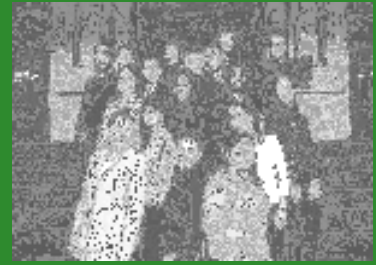


***"Being ignorant is
not so much a
shame as being
unwilling to learn."-
Benjamin Franklin***

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INTERN FOR THE SPEAKER PRO TEM By: Steven Hardy, House Intern

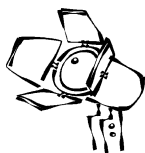
Right at the top of the southern stairwell in the Capitol, Room 340 houses the office of Speaker Pro Tem Mark Burkhalter. Physically, the office is very nice and was just renovated over the summer. It features a private bathroom and kitchen as well as an escape door leading directly into Room 341 where Rules and Appropriations meet. Being located in such a high volume area, it can get quite noisy outside the office. Even with the door closed, high school bands from the north end of the Capitol or lobbyists congregating by the stairs can still be heard.

Unlike the offices of the Speaker or the Majority Leader, this office is actually quite small and is only staffed with one fulltime year round assistant and an intern during session. Since he does not have a large staff, the two of us stay fairly busy. The phones ring constantly, sometimes four lines at once. These calls come from his constituents, those who recognize his powerful position and pretend to be his constituents, lobbyists, reporters, and others. The same is true with those walking in to the office. At any given time, there is a good chance that several people are waiting for a couple minutes of the Pro Tem's time. When somebody new walks in, we joke and say that they need to "get in line." E-mail is the same way. Sometimes twenty or more messages in an hour are received. They need to be filtered and dealt with appropriately. This includes drafting response letters for those from constituents.

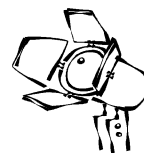
Burkhalter serves on the Appropriations, Rules, Public Utilities, and Natural Resources committees. However, under House rules, the Speaker Pro Tem is an ex-officio with voting powers on all standing committees and subcommittees. Additionally, he is one of the three members on the Budget Conference Committee. This position is very powerful and time consuming. As a result, the number of phone calls, walk-ins, and e-mails to the office only increase due to specific budget requests. The Pro Tem always has a very busy schedule and is not able to be everywhere he needs to be at once. I am often called to run over to a committee meeting and take some notes for him, review a bill, or run any errand he might need.

Burkhalter has had a very busy agenda so far this session and is pushing an abnormally large load of legislation. However, there are three areas that seem to be of most importance. HB 1321 calls for a referendum to incorporate the City of Johns Creek in North Fulton County. This is very important piece of legislation for his constituents and those of neighboring districts. Helping struggling Delta Airlines is another priority. HB 1157 makes it possible for Delta to collect tax credits that they have already earned but have been unable to claim. Lastly, the Speaker Pro Tem would really like to see the NASCAR Hall of Fame locate in Atlanta because of the economic benefits to the city. HB 1182 offers them a financial incentive by making exemptions on construction materials while HB 1400 would redirect intended use of revenues for the NASCAR prestige license plates to the Hall of Fame.

I have greatly enjoyed working in this office and learning from behind the scenes how the Georgia Legislature really works. I have helped research a couple ideas for bills that Burkhalter has had, seen the drafts by Legislative Council, and watched them move through the lawmaking process. There is still a lot of time in the session, and I hear it will only get busier.



Intern Spotlight



PHILIP HENDERSON



School: Georgia State University

Committee: Education, Higher Education, and Economic Development & Tourism

Why did you want to be an intern for the Georgia General Assembly?

I knew that I was interested in the Federal Government, and I wanted to see if I was interested in State and Local Government.

What are your plans after this internship?

I plan to finish my Senior Year in 2006-2007 and go to Law School (probably at GSU).

What issues are you most passionate about that are in this 2006 Session?

All of the Governor's Education Bills

All bills that cut pork barrel spending

HB 1059 Sex Offenders

HB 913 Eminent Domain

INSIDE INFO ON PHILIP HENDERSON:

Age: 19

Where are you from? Born in Wichita, Kansas. Raised in Lovejoy, Georgia.

Brothers/Sisters? 1 Older Brother, Stephen who is in the U.S. Air Force

Favorite Color: Baby Blue

Favorite Movie: Shawshank Redemption

What kind of music do you listen to? Underground Christian (Jason Upton, Keith Green), Gospel, Instrumental Music (Marching Band, Classical)

Pets? 2 Dogs: Jackie D. Miniature Doberman Pinscher and Jimmy B. Miniature Doberman Pinscher and Poodle Mixed

Favorite type of food: Seafood and Italian

Hobbies: Theological Studies, Working Out, Reading, Singing

Favorite sport: College Football, Major League Baseball

HB 1358– TRUTH IN CLASS SIZE ACT

By: Abbey Shockley

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This week the House passed a bill that impacts the classroom sizes in the state of Georgia. As a growing problem in our education system, Governor Sonny Purdue saw it necessary to address education issues in the Quality Basic Education Act. HB 1358, Truth in Class Size Act, provides for a maximum class size in the kindergarten through 8th grade mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts. This bill is sponsored by Representative Brooks Coleman who stated while addressing the House members, “I think this is one of the best pieces of legislation that we’ve ever had.” The bill states that beginning the 2006-2007 school year the maximum class room sizes will be as follows:

Kindergarten program (without full-time aide)	18
Kindergarten program (with full-time aide)	20
Primary grades program (1-3)	21
Upper Elementary grades program (4-5)	28
Middle grades program (6-8)*	28

*For remedial education, vocational laboratory, alternative education, and early intervention programs the maximum class size shall not exceed the funding class size by more than 20%. Example: if you have funding for 20 students and you end up having 24, then you will not have funding for a 25th student.

Within the High School system some class room changes have also been made. Not previously mentioned in the Georgia Code, it now has a maximum class room size for the individual class and the entire system.

Individual Class Size:

High school general education program (9-12), except science	32
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High school general education program (9-12), science only	30
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System Class Size:

High school general education program (9-12), except science	30
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High school general education program (9-12), science only	28
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Whitney, Greg, and Esmeralda hard at work in their first few days here at the Capitol.

RIDDLE ANSWERS

Number 1 must be done in your head and not using paper and a pen.

1. Take 1000 and add 40 to it. Now add another 1000
Now add 30. And another 1000
Now add 20. Now add another 1000. Now add 10.
What is the total? **4100**

2. Forward I am heavy, backwards I am not. What am I?
TON

3. What object has keys that open no locks, space but no room, and you can enter but not go in? **KEYBOARD**

4. How would you rearrange the letters in the words “new door” to make one word? Note: There is only one correct answer. **“ONE WORD”**

HOUSE POLITICAL WORD FIND

R E V O S S O R C K R E U A F
 W F Y D E N H S T O E S A M X
 T N E M N O I T R O P P A E R
 C H Y W X I E B M B R L Q N R
 B L T R Z T Z Q I E E H M D D
 B N E V H A L D C T S Q Z M G
 J L K R M I N O P I E N W E G
 D T R M K R M K B H N P N N L
 F W T T U P H V O W T P L T Q
 U E W O O O C I E F A Z C U Y
 M Y J S O R D V K U T O H Z G
 W D I L J P V F M F I R X B Y
 A T O L D P X K W F V V X K V
 E C K E W A F R E C E S S R S
 R E S O L U T I O N S Q D M X

Word Bank:

ADJOURN
 AMENDMENT
 APPROPRIATIONS
 CLERK
 COMPOSITE
 CROSSOVER
 REAPPORTIONMENT
 RECESS
 REPRESENTATIVES
 RESOLUTION
 WHITEBOOK

Happy Birthday

Here are the interns that will be celebrating a birthday this wonderful month of March.

Bryn Richardson– March 4

Scott Howard– March 20

Brodie Barton– March 26

Elissa Dranove– March 27

*The difference
 between genius and
 stupidity is that
 genius has its limits.*
 - Unknown

